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EXAMINER	
WU, RUTAO	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3639	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/029,270	UEDA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Rutao Wu	3639	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *23 March 2006*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-6,8-13,17,18,20,21 and 26-31* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-6,8-13,17,18,20,21 and 26-31* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. In response filed on March 23, 2006, the applicants amended claims 1, 10, 13, 17, 18, 20 and 21, claims 7, 24-26, 29 and 22-25 are cancelled. Claims 26-31 have been introduced. Claims 1-6, 8-13, 17, 18, 20, 21, 26-31 are pending in the current application.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments, see page 17, filed March 23, 2006, with respect to objection to IDS have been fully considered and are persuasive. The objection of the IDS has been withdrawn.

3. Applicant's arguments, see page 18, filed March 23, 2006, with respect to claim 13 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph rejection of claim 13 has been withdrawn.

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 10, 17, 18, 20, 21, 26-31have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Applicant should be clear whom the "working bodies" are referring to. In claims other than the ones noted above, the examiner understands the "working bodies" as users that are requesting the cost estimation system to estimate the cost of producing components to the users specifications. In the claims noted above, the "working bodies" are referring to providers of the components that are being produced. The examiner respectively suggest changing the terms to make the claims more definite.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-6, 8-11, 17, 18, 20, 21, 26-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat No. 5,249,120 to Foley in view of 5,189,606 to Burns et al.

Referring to claim 1:

A component cost estimation system for estimating a cost of a component, said system comprising:

Foley discloses the following:

a memory which stores cost information for associating a material of a component, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another; and a computer, (col 7: lines 33-36)wherein said computer:

Receives data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured, and manufacturing steps to be applied to the material; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Retrieves a cost associated with the designated material, and costs associated with the designated manufacturing steps from the cost information; and (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Generates data representing a result of estimation of a cost of the designated component based on each of the retrieved costs. (col 6: lines 61-63)

Foley does not expressly disclose that the system stores and determines component costs based on a region engaging in manufacturing the component.

Burns et al discloses a knowledge base containing a location code that links the project description information to adjust costs by the 18 CSI Divisions and five CCMAS Elements by location to account for differences in construction materials and the mix of labor and equipment used by different states and countries. (col 15: lines 37-51) Burns et al disclose another knowledge base that contains the default factor used to escalate the construction, operations, maintenance, repair, energy, and cleaning costs based on year, type of cost, and region of the world. (col 19: lines 24-28)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Foley's invention to have the ability to estimate component costs based on different regions of the world where the manufacture is taking place. It would have been obvious to perform such modification because Foley disclose that labor rate and economics are two inputs into the program for cost estimation (Fig 1) so Foley would be able to enter different labor rates for different regions to consider sever different manufacturing paths. (col 6: lines 33-35)

Referring to claim 2:

Foley discloses

The component cost estimation system according to claim 1, wherein:

The cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps, devices used in the manufacturing steps, and costs involved in using the devices with one another, (col 6: lines 59-63)

Said computer:

Receives data for designating the material, the manufacturing steps, and the devices used in the manufacturing steps; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Retrieves costs associated with the designated material and the designated devices from the cost information; and (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Determines a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs. (col 6: lines 56-59; col 17: lines 29-35)

Referring to claim 3:

Foley discloses

The component cost estimation system according to claim 1, wherein the cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps and costs of child components which are the components to be used in the manufacturing steps with each other. (col 6: lines 56-63; col 17: lines 29-35)

Referring to claim 4:

Foley discloses

The component cost estimation system according to claim 1, wherein:

The manufacturing steps include a pressing process; (col 18 lines 24-26)

The cost information includes information associating a pressing device to be used in the pressing process and a cost involved in using the pressing device with each other; and (Fig 15; col 17: lines 56-62)

Said computer;

Receives data for designating the pressing process, a material to which the pressing process is applied, and the pressing device to be used in the pressing process; (col 7: lines 38-68)

Retrieves costs associated with the designated material and the designated pressing device from the cost information; and (col 7: lines 44-58)

Determines a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs. (col 8: lines 13-15)

As per claims 5 and 6

Foley does disclose estimating cost of manufacturing a component which involves the pressing process. (col 7: lines 38-68; col 18: lines 25-27)

Foley fail to expressly disclose the costs of the molds used in the pressing press and which are either newly manufactured, or manufactured by remodeling an existing mold.

Examiner submits however, that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include molds that are either newly manufactured, or by remodeling an existing mold. The reason such modification can be made is because it does not effect the method of generating a cost estimation of manufacturing a component presented by Foley by analyzing the process from raw materials to the finished part, incrementally calculating all the costs associated with each step of the path as indicated by Foley (col 6: lines 56-59). Foley provides specific motivation by indicating that the invention is equally applicable to any type of part or set of manufacturing processes. (col 6: lines 23-25)

Referring to claim 8:

Foley discloses

The component cost estimation system according to claim 1, wherein said computer:

Is ready to received designation to a part of the plurality of manufacturing steps; and (col 6: lines 26-30, 56-59)

Determines a result of estimation of the cost of the component by considering predetermined standard manufacturing steps to be designated instead of the manufacturing steps other than the designated manufacturing step. (col 17: lines 29-35)

Referring to claim 9:

Foley discloses

The component cost estimation system according to claim 1, further comprising a reception server which receives an access from outside via network, and sends the data representing the result of estimation of the cost of the component obtained by said computer to an accesser. (col 17: lines 29-35)

Referring to claim 10:

A component cost estimation system which receives accesses from a plurality of working bodies via a network, and estimates a cost of a component, said system comprising:

Foley discloses the following:

A memory which stores cost information for associating a material of a component to be manufactured, cost of the material, manufacturing steps to be applied to the material, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another; (col 6: lines 26-30, 65-66)

A reception server which receives designation data for designating a the material of the component and the manufacturing steps to be applied to the material from the working bodies who request and estimation via said network; and (col 6: lines 15-18, 26-30)

An estimation computer, (col 6: lines 30-35)

Wherein said estimation computer:

Retrieves costs associated with the material and manufacturing steps designated by the designation data received by said reception server from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Generates estimation result data representing a result of the estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs; and (col 6: lines 15-18, 30-35, 56-63)

Sends the estimation result data to the working bodies who have requested the estimation via said network. (Fig 1, col 17: lines 29-35)

Foley does not expressly disclose that the system stores and determines component costs based on a region engaging in manufacturing the component.

Burns et al discloses a knowledge base containing a location code that links the project description information to adjust costs by the 18 CSI Divisions and five CCMAS Elements by location to account for differences in construction materials and the mix of labor and equipment used by different states and countries. (col 15: lines 37-51) Burns et al disclose another knowledge base that contains the default factor used to escalate the construction, operations, maintenance, repair, energy, and cleaning costs based on year, type of cost, and region of the world. (col 19: lines 24-28)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Foley's invention to have the ability to estimate component costs based on different regions of the world where the manufacture is taking place. It would have been obvious to perform such modification because Foley disclose that labor rate and economics are two inputs into the program for cost

estimation (Fig 1) so Foley would be able to enter different labor rates for different regions to consider sever different manufacturing paths. (col 6: lines 33-35)

As per claim 11:

Foley does not expressly disclose:

Said reception server receives a browsing request for browsing a content of the cost information; and

Said estimation computer sends the content of the cost information to a sender of the browsing request via said network in response to the browsing request received by said reception server.

Foley does disclose a program that is used to evaluate the fabrication cost related to the manufacture of a composite part or a set of parts over a given production schedule as specified by the user. (col 6: lines 15-18) Foley also disclose that the following separate components of the total part cost are calculated: equipment cost; labor cost; labor overhead cost; material cost; tooling cost; and cost of factory floor space. (col 6: lines 59-63) Therefore, it is an obvious feature that Foley's invention allows the user to browse the different aspects of the cost information and also sends the cost information to the requesting user.

Referring to claim 17:

A component cost estimation method for estimating a cost of a component, comprising:

Foley discloses the following:

Storing cost information for associating a material of a component, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps; (Tables 5-9)

Receiving data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured, and manufacturing steps to be applied to the designated material; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Retrieving a cost associated with the designated material, and costs associated with the designated manufacturing steps from the cost information; and (col 6: lines 26-30)

Generating data representing a result of estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs. (col 6: lines 30-35, 56-63)

Foley does not expressly disclose that the system stores and determines component costs based on a region engaging in manufacturing the component.

Burns et al discloses a knowledge base containing a location code that links the project description information to adjust costs by the 18 CSI Divisions and five CCMAS Elements by location to account for differences in construction materials and the mix of labor and equipment used by different states and countries. (col 15: lines 37-51) Burns et al disclose another knowledge base that contains the default factor used to escalate the construction, operations, maintenance, repair, energy, and cleaning costs based on year, type of cost, and region of the world. (col 19: lines 24-28)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Foley's invention to have the ability to estimate component costs based on different regions of the world where the manufacture is

taking place. It would have been obvious to perform such modification because Foley disclose that labor rate and economics are two inputs into the program for cost estimation (Fig 1) so Foley would be able to enter different labor rates for different regions to consider sever different manufacturing paths. (col 6: lines 33-35)

Referring to claim 18:

A component cost estimation method for receiving access from a plurality of working bodies via network and estimating a cost of a component, said method comprising:

Foley discloses the following:

Storing cost information for associating a material of a component to be manufactured, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps to be applied to the material, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another; (Tables 5-9)

Receiving designation data for designating the material of the component and the manufacturing steps to be applied to the material from the working bodies who request an estimation via said network; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Receiving costs associated with the material and manufacturing steps designated by the received designation data from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Generating estimation result data representing a result of estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs; and (col 6: lines 30-35, 56-63)

Sending the estimation result data to the working bodies who have requested the estimation via said network. (FIG 1, col 6: lines 15-18)

Foley does not expressly disclose that the system stores and determines component costs based on a region engaging in manufacturing the component.

Burns et al discloses a knowledge base containing a location code that links the project description information to adjust costs by the 18 CSI Divisions and five CCMAS Elements by location to account for differences in construction materials and the mix of labor and equipment used by different states and countries. (col 15: lines 37-51) Burns et al disclose another knowledge base that contains the default factor used to escalate the construction, operations, maintenance, repair, energy, and cleaning costs based on year, type of cost, and region of the world. (col 19: lines 24-28)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Foley's invention to have the ability to estimate component costs based on different regions of the world where the manufacture is taking place. It would have been obvious to perform such modification because Foley disclose that labor rate and economics are two inputs into the program for cost estimation (Fig 1) so Foley would be able to enter different labor rates for different regions to consider sever different manufacturing paths. (col 6: lines 33-35)

Referring to claim 20:

A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer, which is connected to a memory for storing cost information associating a material of a component, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another, wherein the cost

information is associated with each region engaging in manufacturing the component, to perform:

Foley discloses the following:

Receiving data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured and manufacturing steps to be applied to the material; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Retrieving a cost associated with the designated material, and costs associated with the designated manufacturing steps from the cost information; and (col 6: lines 26-30)

Generating data representing a result of estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs. (col 6: lines 30-35, 56-63)

Foley does not expressly disclose that the system stores and determines component costs based on a region engaging in manufacturing the component.

Burns et al discloses a knowledge base containing a location code that links the project description information to adjust costs by the 18 CSI Divisions and five CCMAS Elements by location to account for differences in construction materials and the mix of labor and equipment used by different states and countries. (col 15: lines 37-51) Burns et al disclose another knowledge base that contains the default factor used to escalate the construction, operations, maintenance, repair, energy, and cleaning costs based on year, type of cost, and region of the world. (col 19: lines 24-28)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Foley's invention to have the ability to estimate component costs based on different regions of the world where the manufacture is

taking place. It would have been obvious to perform such modification because Foley disclose that labor rate and economics are two inputs into the program for cost estimation (Fig 1) so Foley would be able to enter different labor rates for different regions to consider sever different manufacturing paths. (col 6: lines 33-35)

Referring to claim 21:

A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer, which is connected to a reception server for receiving data for designating a region engaging in manufacturing the component and for receiving designation data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured and manufacturing steps to be applied to the material from a plurality of working bodies who request an estimation via a network, and is also connected to a memory for storing cost information fro associating a material of a component, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another, wherein the cost information is associated with each region engaging in manufacturing the component, to perform:

Foley discloses the following:

Retrieving costs associated with the material and manufacturing steps designated by the designation data received by said reception server from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Generating estimation result data representing a result of estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs; and (col 6: lines 30-35, 56-63)

Sending the estimation result data to the working bodies who have requested the estimation via said network. (FIG 1, col 6: lines 15-18)

Foley does not expressly disclose that the system stores and determines component costs based on a region engaging in manufacturing the component.

Burns et al discloses a knowledge base containing a location code that links the project description information to adjust costs by the 18 CSI Divisions and five CCMAS Elements by location to account for differences in construction materials and the mix of labor and equipment used by different states and countries. (col 15: lines 37-51) Burns et al disclose another knowledge base that contains the default factor used to escalate the construction, operations, maintenance, repair, energy, and cleaning costs based on year, type of cost, and region of the world. (col 19: lines 24-28)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Foley's invention to have the ability to estimate component costs based on different regions of the world where the manufacture is taking place. It would have been obvious to perform such modification because Foley disclose that labor rate and economics are two inputs into the program for cost estimation (Fig 1) so Foley would be able to enter different labor rates for different regions to consider sever different manufacturing paths. (col 6: lines 33-35)

Referring to claim 26:

A component cost estimation system for estimating a cost of a component, said system comprising:

Foley discloses the following:

A memory which stores cost information for associating a material of a component, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another; and (col 7: lines 33-36)

A computer, wherein:

The manufacturing steps include a pressing process; (col 18 lines 24-26)

The cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps and costs of child components which are the components to be used in the manufacturing steps with each other; (col 6: lines 56-63; col 17: lines 29-35)

The cost information further includes information associating a pressing device to be used in the pressing process and a cost involved in using the pressing device with each other; (Fig 15; col 17: lines 56-63) and

Said computer:

Receives data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured, and manufacturing steps to be applied to the material; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Receives data for designating the pressing process, a material to which the pressing process is applied, and the pressing device to be used in the pressing process; (col 7: lines 38-68)

Retrieves a cost associated with the designated material, costs associated with the designated pressing device and costs associated with the designated manufacturing steps from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Foley does not express disclose obtains costs of molds to be used in steps included in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments to be applied to a

surface of the component, and uses the obtained costs as costs retrieved from the cost information;

However, Foley does disclose tooling as an input for cost estimation. (col 6: lines 26-30) Therefore, it would have been obvious for Foley to include the cost of molds in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments for cost estimation.

Determines a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs; (col 8: lines 13-15) and

Generates data representing a result of estimation of a cost of the designated component based on each of the retrieved costs. (col 6: lines 61-63)

Referring to claim 27:

A component cost estimation system which receives accesses from a plurality of working bodies via a network, and estimates a cost of a component, said system comprising:

Foley discloses the following:

A memory which stores cost information for associating a material of a component to be manufactured, cost of the material, manufacturing steps to be applied to the material, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another; (col 6: lines 26-30, 65-66)

A reception server which receives designation data for designating a the material of the component and the manufacturing steps to be applied to the material from the working bodies who request and estimation via said network; and (col 6: lines 15-18, 26-30)

An estimation computer, (col 6: lines 30-35)

Wherein:

The manufacturing steps include a pressing process; (col 18 lines 24-26)

The cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps and costs of child components which are the components to be used in the manufacturing steps with each other; (col 6: lines 56-63; col 17: lines 29-35)

The cost information further includes information associating a pressing device to be used in the pressing process and a cost involved in using the pressing device with each other; (Fig 15; col 17: lines 56-63) and

said estimation computer:

Receives data for designating the pressing process, a material to which the pressing process is applied, and the pressing device to be used in the pressing process; (col 7: lines 38-68)

Retrieves a cost associated with the material, the designated pressing device and manufacturing steps designated by the designation data received by said reception server from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Foley does not express disclose obtains costs of molds to be used in steps included in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments to be applied to a surface of the component, and uses the obtained costs as costs retrieved from the cost information;

However, Foley does disclose tooling as an input for cost estimation. (col 6: lines 26-30) Therefore, it would have been obvious for Foley to include the cost of molds in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments for cost estimation.

Determines a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs; (col 8: lines 13-15)

Generates estimation result data representing a result of the estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs; and (col 6: lines 15-18, 30-35, 56-63)

Sends the estimation result data to the working bodies who have requested the estimation via said network. (Fig 1, col 17: lines 29-35)

Referring to claim 28:

A component cost estimation method for estimating a cost of a component, comprising:

Storing cost information for associating a material of a component, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component including a pressing process, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps; (Tables 5-9) wherein the cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps and costs of child components which are the components to be used in the manufacturing steps with each other, (col 6: lines 56-63; col 17: lines 29-35) and further includes information associating a pressing device to be used in the pressing process and a cost involved in using the pressing device with each other; (Fig 15; col 17: lines 56-62)

Receives data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured, and manufacturing steps to be applied to the material; (col 6: lines 26-30)

Receives data for designating the pressing process, a material to which the pressing process is applied, and the pressing device to be used in the pressing process; (col 7: lines 38-68)

Retrieves a cost associated with the designated material, costs associated with the designated pressing device and costs associated with the designated manufacturing steps from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Foley does not express disclose obtains costs of molds to be used in steps included in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments to be applied to a surface of the component, and uses the obtained costs as costs retrieved from the cost information;

However, Foley does disclose tooling as an input for cost estimation. (col 6: lines 26-30) Therefore, it would have been obvious for Foley to include the cost of molds in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments for cost estimation.

Determines a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs; (col 8: lines 13-15) and

Generates data representing a result of estimation of a cost of the designated component based on each of the retrieved costs. (col 6: lines 61-63)

Referring to claim 29:

A component cost estimation method for receiving accesses from a plurality of working bodies via a network, and estimating a cost of a component, said method comprising:

Storing cost information for associating a material of a component to be manufactured, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps including a pressing process to be applied to the material, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another; (Tables 5-9) wherein the cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps and costs of child components which are the components to be used in the manufacturing steps with each other, (col 6: lines 56-63; col 17: lines 29-35) and further includes information associating a pressing device to be used in the pressing process and a cost involved in using the pressing device with each other; (Fig 15; col 17: lines 56-62)

Receiving designation data for designating the material of a component and the manufacturing steps to be applied to the material from the working bodies who request estimation via said network; (col 6: lines 15-18, 26-30)

Receiving data for designating the pressing process, a material to which the pressing process is applied, and the pressing device to be used in the pressing process; (col 7: lines 38-68)

Retrieving costs associated with the material, the designated pressing device and manufacturing steps designated by the received designation data from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Foley does not express disclose obtains costs of molds to be used in steps included in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments to be applied to a surface of the component, and uses the obtained costs as costs retrieved from the cost information;

However, Foley does disclose tooling as an input for cost estimation. (col 6: lines 26-30) Therefore, it would have been obvious for Foley to include the cost of molds in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments for cost estimation.

Determines a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs; (col 8: lines 13-15)

Generates estimation result data representing a result of the estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs; and (col 6: lines 15-18, 30-35, 56-63)

Sends the estimation result data to the working bodies who have requested the estimation via said network. (Fig 1, col 17: lines 29-35)

Referring to claim 30:

A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer, which is connected to a memory for storing cost information associating a material of a component including a pressing process, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another, wherein, the cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps and costs of child components which are the components to be used in the manufacturing steps with each other, and further includes information associating a pressing device to be used in the pressing process and a cost involved in using the pressing device with each other, the program to perform:

Receiving designation data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured, and the manufacturing steps to be applied to the designated material; (col 6: lines 15-18, 26-30)

Receiving data for designating the pressing process, a material to which the pressing process is applied, and the pressing device to be used in the pressing process; (col 7: lines 38-68)

Retrieving a cost associated with the material, costs associating with the the designated pressing device and costs associated with the designated manufacturing steps from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Foley does not express disclose obtains costs of molds to be used in steps included in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments to be applied to a surface of the component, and uses the obtained costs as costs retrieved from the cost information;

However, Foley does disclose tooling as an input for cost estimation. (col 6: lines 26-30) Therefore, it would have been obvious for Foley to include the cost of molds in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments for cost estimation.

Determining a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs; (col 8: lines 13-15)

Generating estimation result data representing a result of the estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs; and (col 6: lines 15-18, 30-35, 56-63)

Referring to claim 31:

A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer, which is connected to a reception server for receiving designation data for designating a material of a component to be manufactured and manufacturing steps including a pressing process to be applied to the material from a plurality of working

bodies who request an estimation via a network, and is also connected to a memory for storing cost information for associating a material of a component, a cost of the material, manufacturing steps of the component, and costs involved in the manufacturing steps with one another, wherein the cost information includes information associating the manufacturing steps and costs of child components which are the components to be used in the manufacturing steps with each other, and further includes information associating a pressing device to be used in the pressing process and a cost involved in using the pressing device with each other, the program to perform:

Receiving designation data for designating the material of a component and the manufacturing steps to be applied to the material from the working bodies who request estimation via said network; (col 6: lines 15-18, 26-30)

Receiving data for designating the pressing process, a material to which the pressing process is applied, and the pressing device to be used in the pressing process; (col 7: lines 38-68)

Retrieving costs associated with the material, the designated pressing device and manufacturing steps designated by the received designation data from the cost information; (col 6: lines 26-30, 64-66)

Foley does not express disclose obtains costs of molds to be used in steps included in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments to be applied to a surface of the component, and uses the obtained costs as costs retrieved from the cost information;

However, Foley does disclose tooling as an input for cost estimation. (col 6: lines 26-30) Therefore, it would have been obvious for Foley to include the cost of molds in the pressing process and costs of surface treatments for cost estimation.

Determines a result of estimation based on a sum of the retrieved costs; (col 8: lines 13-15)

Generating estimation result data representing a result of the estimation of a cost of the component based on the retrieved costs; and (col 6: lines 15-18, 30-35, 56-63)

Sending the estimation result data to the working bodies who have requested the estimation via said network. (Fig 1, col 17: lines 29-35)

3. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foley in view of Burns et al in further view of U.S. Pat No. 4,827,508 to Shear.

As per claim 12:

Foley combined with Burns et al does not disclose the following:

The component cost estimation system according to claim 10, further comprising a verification data memory which stores verification data for verifying the working bodies,

Wherein said reception server:

Receives verification data sent from the working bodies via said network; and

Determines whether or not to receive the designation data from the working bodies based on the verification data sent from the working bodies and the verification

data stored in said verification data memory, and refuses to receive the designation data when determined not to receive the designation data.

Shear discloses that system 10 may require the user to input identification and/or password information along with his access request. System 10 checks the authority of the user to access the database by transmitting the inputted ID/password information to decoder/biller block for comparison with a list of authorized IDs/passwords stored in memory. If decoder/biller block decoder control logic denies authorization to continue with database access the decoder/biller refuses to decrypt any data sent to it. (col 15: lines 3-15) Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Foley's invention to include the ability for secure access by users and refuse any data access when authentication is not received. One would be motivated to perform such modification to ensure that the database/memory system only receives data from authorized people, thus ensuring an accurate database.

4. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Foley in view of Burns et al in further view of U.S. Pat No. 4,992,940 to Dworkin.

As per claim 13:

Foley combined with Burns et al does not disclose the following:

The component cost estimation system according to claim 10, wherein the cost information is made up of information obtained based on a cost of a component provided by a provider selected according to a predetermined standard from among a plurality of providers who provide substantially the same component.

Dworkin discloses in his invention that allows a user to easily shop for equipment, having specified characteristic, from a plurality of vendors, and wherein the user can easily determine which vendor offers the best price. (col 2 lines 67-68, col 3: lines 1-2) Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Foley's invention to include the ability to select cost information according to a predetermined standard from information provided by the providers if the component. Foley provides specific motivation by disclosing that the main program receives inputs from its database including data related to parts, equipment, production, raw material, labor... (col 6: lines 26-20) so the user can choose a component provider meeting certain standards.

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rutao Wu whose telephone number is (571)272-3136. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on (571)272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

rw

JOHN W. HAYES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER